GMA and Shoreline Master Program 2002 Updates
Recommendations for Puget Sound Local Governments
Related to Implementation of the
Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan
November, 2001

Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team
P.O. Box 40900
Olympia, WA 98504-0900
360-407-7300 or 1-800-54-SOUND
www.wa.gov/puget_sound

The Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team provides the following list of recommendations to local governments who are revising their Comprehensive Plans, Critical Areas Ordinances, Shoreline Master Programs and development regulations. This document can be used as a supplement to and is consistent with the checklist material sent out by the Washington Office of Community Development in September, 2001. The recommendations are intended to provide actions, policies, and resource materials to help implement the *Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan* and protect the water quality and biological resources of Puget Sound.

Comprehensive Plan

The Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team recommends that local comprehensive plans incorporate policies in support of the following:

Land Use and Rural Elements

1. Incorporate measures to retain natural hydrology and processes, such as establishing goals for limiting effective impervious surfaces and preserving open spaces and forests.
2. Incorporate relevant land-use recommendations from watershed and salmon recovery plans, including Chapter 400-12 nonpoint plans as well as current "2514" and "2496" processes, into land use regulations.
3. Develop provisions to allow and promote clustering where green space, wetlands, habitat, and hydrologic processes need protection. Incentives such as density credits or transfers may be useful tools.
4. Consider the individual and cumulative impacts of development proposals on shellfish growing areas and nearshore habitat in land use decisions such as densities and future UGA boundaries. Limit densities where appropriate.
5. Adopt and implement the new comprehensive stormwater program of the *2000 Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan.* Elements of this program are targeted at levels to protect salmon species listed under the Endangered Species Act, and include:
   - Stormwater controls for new development and redevelopment.
   - Stormwater site plan review.
   - Inspection of construction sites.

- Maintenance of permanent facilities.
- Source control program.
- Illicit discharges and response to water quality violations.
- Identification and ranking of stormwater problems.
- Programs for public education and involvement.
- Provisions for innovative technologies for low-impact development, as demonstration projects or directly in development regulations.
- Integration of stormwater into watershed or basin planning.
- Stable funding such as a utility.
- Monitoring of program implementation and environmental conditions.
- Schedule for implementation.

The comprehensive stormwater program of the *Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan* can be found at:
http://www.wa.gov/puget_sound/Programs/Stormwater.htm

Capital Facilities/Utilities/Open Space Elements

1. Coordinate the acquisition of open space lands with local watershed and salmon recovery plans, and consider acquisition of areas of shoreline areas designated as Natural or Conservancy under the Shoreline Master Program.
2. Adopt on-site sewage operation, maintenance, inspection and education programs consistent with the on-site sewage system program recommendations of the *Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan*. The long-range program is available at: http://www.wa.gov/puget_sound/Programs/On_site.htm
3. For stormwater programs, see Land Use and Rural Elements above.

Natural Resource Lands Element (counties only)

1. Designate commercial shellfish growing areas as long-term lands of agricultural significance to protect the beds from incompatible adjacent uses. This also allows for permitting of shellfish processing businesses as accessory uses dependent on the adjacent shellfish beds as a resource-based industry. An example of the application of this tool can be found in the Natural Resources element of the Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan at:
http://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/commdevelopment/complan.htm
2. Consider funding Conservation Districts to assist commercial and noncommercial farmers and other landowners in controlling and preventing pollution.

Environmental Element

1. Adopt a policy of no net loss of areas and functions of wetlands and fish and wildlife habitat.
2. Develop local environmental education programs that encourage individuals and businesses to prevent pollution from sources such as household hazardous waste, boating and marina activities, and pesticides and fertilizers on gardens and lawns.

3. Seek preservation and acquisition of high quality natural habitats.
4. Employ the Public Benefit Rating System as a tax incentive program to preserve high quality natural habitats. More information is available at: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/99108.html
5. Approve wetland mitigation that provide the benefits of mitigation before allowing the loss of wetlands (see recommendations under Critical Areas Ordinance).

Subdivision Code/Development Regulations

The following provisions will allow for innovative development techniques that have been found to better maintain natural watershed functions.

A. Include provisions to implement comprehensive stormwater management, clearing and grading regulations, and an on-site sewage systems operations and maintenance program.

B. Designate *areas of special concern* where land drains to shellfish growing areas and provide more stringent regulations for on-site sewage systems. Similar concepts can be applied to stormwater measures to protect water quality and biological resources.

C. Stormwater low-impact development

1. Include provisions to limit impervious surface and to increase the area for vegetation retention for both new development and re-development projects.
2. Adopt regulations to allow innovative techniques for stormwater management, including low-impact development measures that promote infiltration on site, reduced impervious surfaces, retaining vegetation, and narrower streets, alternatives to curb-and-gutter systems, and disconnected, dispersed drainage systems.

Information on low-impact development, including model ordinances, is available on the PSAT website at:
http://www.wa.gov/puget_sound/Programs/LID.htm

D. Promote Smart Growth techniques by allowing mixed land uses, accessory dwelling units, pedestrian-friendly neighborhood design, multi-modal transportation, clustering for preservation of green space, and other measures.
The Office of Community Development provides resource information on their web site entitled "Smart Growth" at: http://smartgrowth.wa.gov/

E. Provide and implement regulations for enforcement and promote compliance through public education and information.

Critical Areas Ordinance

Critical Areas Ordinance revisions that adopt the following recommendations will provide greater protection for the biological resources that are critical to the health of Puget Sound.

- Designate marine riparian areas and nearshore habitats (surf smelt and sand lance spawning areas, eelgrass and kelp beds) as critical fish and wildlife habitat areas.
- Designate feeder bluffs not only as geologically hazardous (eroding, slide-prone) bluffs, but also as areas critical for maintaining forage fish spawning habitat where sediment from the feeder bluffs nourishes such habitat.
- Designate shellfish beds as critical fish and wildlife habitat areas.
- Coordinate flood hazard area plans and mitigation studies with local watershed and salmon recovery planning processes.
- Revise wetland buffers to be consistent with the Department of Ecology publication "Wetland Buffers: Use and Effectiveness" Publication #92-10.
- Adopt regulations for wetlands consistent with the guidance in the Marine and Freshwater Habitat program (addendum) of the *Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan* at: http://www.wa.gov/puget_sound/Programs/Habitat.htm
- Adopt mitigation policies for wetlands consistent with the state Alternative Mitigation Policy Guidance for Aquatic Permitting, found at: http://www.wa.gov/wdfw/hab/ahg/altmtgtn.pdf
- Require consistency of habitat protection plans with recommendations in Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Aquatic Habitat guidelines for fish and wildlife conservation areas, which can be found at: http://www.wa.gov/wdfw/hab/ahg/
- Implement a strong compliance program that includes education as well as enforcement actions and penalties.

The Office of Community Development provides information on and bibliographies of Best Available Science resources at: http://www.ocd.wa.gov/info/lgd/growth/bas/index.tpl

The Washington Natural Heritage program provides information on rare plants, animals and ecosystems at: http://www.wa.gov/dnr/htdocs/fr/nhp/wanhp.html

The WDFW Priority Habitat and Species provides a GIS data base for listed federal and state species at: http://www.wa.gov/wdfw/hab/release.htm

Shoreline Master Program

Good Shoreline Master Programs are important to restoring and maintaining the health of Puget Sound. The *Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan* marine and freshwater habitat program provides guidance for local government programs that outlines elements for long-term protection of freshwater, nearshore and marine resources. Recommendations are as follows:

1. Planning
    - Coordinate shoreline planning with watershed and salmon recovery planning, as well as with countywide planning policies.
    - Update Shoreline Master Programs to incorporate provisions to protect threatened species of salmon and other threatened or endangered species.
    - Use shoreline designations to protect areas of high value resources such as kelp and eelgrass beds, shellfish growing areas, and forage fish spawning areas that have been designated as critical areas in order to provide consistency with critical areas ordinances.
    - Identify opportunities for public access and open space corridors.
    - Protect nearshore habitats through policies that preserve natural sediment sources and littoral drift processes.
    - Cooperate with the Washington Department of Transportation in developing the 20-year State Highway System Plan.
    - Evaluate the impacts of full development under alternative scenarios.
    - Integrate habitat acquisition with public access goals.
2. Acquisition
    - Develop a plan to provide for responsible management of acquired lands.
    - Offer Ecology's Public Benefit Rating System as incentives for private preservation and restoration activities. Information is available at: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/99108.html
3. Public Involvement and Education
    - Use public access sites to foster appreciation of biological diversity.
    - Provide education on benefits of natural landscapes.
    - Make information on public access sites available to public.

    Resources for education programs to protect shorelines can be found at: http://www.wa.gov/puget_sound/Programs/Pie_resource.htm

4. Regulation
    - Use guidance for best available science in standards for setbacks, mitigation, buffers, and other aspects of permitting.
    - Require alternatives to hard shoreline armoring unless it is shown that there is no other alternative for protecting existing structures.

- Adopt the state Alternative Mitigation Policy Guidance for Aquatic Permitting. Guidelines (see above under Critical Areas Ordinance).

Recommended resources to assist with shoreline inventory requirements of Shoreline Master Program updates are listed below according to the categories listed in the guidelines. For more detailed and updated information on the inventory data below, see the Ecology website at: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/SMA/guidelines/inventoryanalysis.html or contact Cinde Donoghue at cdon461@ecy.wa.gov, 360-902-2232.

Existing data layers for physical shoreline features:

- Ecology - Drift cell layer – available soon
- Department of Natural Resources (DNR) ShoreZone Inventory – substrate
- DNR - ShoreZone Inventory – cross shore database is being extracted and mapped by Ecology for supratidal, intertidal and subtidal.
- Ecology - Oblique aerial photos 2000
- Ecology slope stability can be taken from the CZM Atlas, including erosion areas and feeder bluffs.

Existing data layers for biological features:

- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) forage fish database (Ecology is releasing for WDFW)
- WDFW priority species database (contact WDFW)
- DNR ShoreZone Inventory
- WDFW – Salmon Steelhead Habitat Inventory Assessment Project database
- DNR has ShoreZone Inventory videotapes; can work out getting digital copies.
- DNR is digitizing old ownership maps.

Existing data layers for shoreline modifications:

- DNR ShoreZone Inventory
- Ecology - Oblique aerial photos
- DNR orthophotos
- Conservation Commission Limiting Factors Analyses

An example of a comprehensive nearshore inventory study is available from King county at: http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/watersheds/puget/nearshore/sonr.htm

Video available: A recommended tool for educating elected officials, planning commissions, and the public in shoreline natural processes relevant to shoreline management is the Puget Sound Action Team's 17-minute video "Nearshore Processes." Please call 1-800-54-SOUND for information on receiving a copy of the video, which was produced in 2001.

The complete Marine and Freshwater Habitat Program of the *Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan* can be found at:

http://www.wa.gov/puget_sound/Programs/Habitat.htm